

**EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE:
Applying an RtI Framework to Promote
Positive Behavioral Development for
School-Aged Children**

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D) INTRODUCTION

A) THERE IS A CALL FOR CHANGE

A change in:

➡ *How students with behavioral needs are taught.*

➡ *How we use research for informing instruction and behavior.*

----And if I may be so bold----

➡ *How to get along and build positive, productive relationships.*

B) THESE CHANGES ARE INHERENTLY ABOUT US

1) **Most of us gravitate toward things that mean something to us,**

a) And for most of us...that is relationships.

2) **If relationships don't anchor meaning for you,**

a) Then you seek something else that does.

3) **Often times...that is a particular position...**

a) Methodology or worldview.

b) Discipline requires a different focus.

C) RATE OF EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DIFFICULTIES

1) **A large body of research accumulated over the past 20 years suggests that a number of students fail in social relations with –**

a) Peers,

b) Teachers, and

c) Parents.^{1 2 3}

¹ Patterson, G., Reid, J., & Dishion, T. (1992). *Antisocial boys: A social interactional approach*. Vol. 4. Eugene, OR: Castalia.

² Reid, J., Patterson, G., & Snyder, J. (Eds.) (2002). *Antisocial behavior in student and adolescents: A developmental analysis and the Oregon Model for Intervention*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

2) **These negative school experiences.**

- a) Largely account for young people becoming alienated or disconnected from school.^{4 5 6 7}

3) **Factors associated with a difficult transition to school,**

- a) Weaknesses in academic skills,
b) Problems with social skills,
c) Trouble following directions, and
d) Difficulty with independent and group work.⁸

4) **Early academic skills and socio-emotional behaviors are linked to subsequent academic achievement.**^{9 10}

- a) A student who can pay attention, inhibit impulsive behavior, and relate appropriately to adults and peers may be able to take advantage of the learning opportunities in the classroom, thus more easily mastering reading and math concepts taught in elementary school.

D) **AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR**

1) **Aggressive behavior is learned behavior.**

³ Walker, H.M., & Sevenson, H. (2002). Developmental prevention of at-risk outcomes for vulnerable antisocial student and youth. In K. Lane, F.M. Gresham, & T. O'Shaughnessy (Eds.), *Interventions for student with or at-risk for emotional and behavioral disorders* (pp. 177-194). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

⁴ Glover, S., Burns, J., Butler, H. et al., (1998). Social environments and the emotional wellbeing of young people. *Family Matters*, 49, 11-16.

⁵ Nutbeam, D., Smith, C., & Moore, L. (1999). Warning! Schools can damage your health: Alienation from school and its impact on health behaviour. *J Pediatric Child Health*, 29(1), 25-30.

⁶ Osterman, K.F. (2000). Students' need for belonging in the school community. *Rev Educ Res.*, 70, 323-367.

⁷ Samdal, O., Nutbeam, D., Wold, B., et al. (1998). Achieving health and educational goals through schools – a study of the importance of school climate and the students' satisfaction with school. *Health Education Resource*, 13, 383-397.

⁸ Rimm-Kaufman, S.E., Pianta, R.C., & Cox, M.J. (2000). Teachers' judgments of problems in the transition to kindergarten. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 15, 147-166.

⁹ Cunha, F., Heckman, J., Lochner, L., & Masterov, D. (2006). Interpreting the evidence on life cycle skill formation. In E. Hanushek & F. Welch (Eds.), *Handbook of the economics of education* (pp. 307-451). North Holland: Elsevier.

¹⁰ Entwisle, D.R., Alexander, K.L., & Olson, L.S. (2005). First grade and educational attainment by age 22: A new story. *American Journal of Sociology*, 110, 1458-1502.

- a) Belief in instinct, not learning, as the primary source of human aggression dies hard, although evidence to the contrary is overwhelming.¹¹
- 2) **Student from ages 2 yrs. – 9 yrs. with consistently high levels of aggression.**
 - a) More likely to have achievement problems in third grade.¹²
- 3) **Manipulation, cheating, teasing, bullying, and aggression as well as altruism, cooperation, sharing, and empathy – appear to be learned largely by means of:**
 - a) Observational, vicarious experiences (e.g., seeing others perform the behavior and receiving a reward for doing so).
 - b) Or direct experiences (e.g., enacting the behavior and receiving a reward for doing so).
- 4) **Chronically aggressive youngsters.**
 - a) Characteristically, individuals with a life history in which from their early years on, aggression was frequently used, and used successfully, by family, peers, media figures, and others constituting the student's real-life environment.
 - b) Aggression is very often richly, reliably, and immediately rewarded. It works; it pays off; it is reinforced.
 - c) Behavior which is quite difficult to change.
- E) **THE DISCIPLINING EVENT**
 - 1) **Primary means for which symbols of power and authority are perpetuated.**
 - a) The core of school discipline.
 - i) Establishing an **agreed set of rules.**

¹¹ Bandura, A. (1973). "Aggression: A social learning analysis". Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

¹² NICHD Early Child Care Research Network (2004). Trajectories of physical aggression from toddlerhood to middle childhood: Predictors, correlates, and outcomes. *Monographs of the Society of Research in Child Development*, 69(4, Serial, No. 278).

- ii) Shared appreciation that **rule breakers will be punished.**
- iii) Shared appreciation that **playing by the rules gets rewarded.**

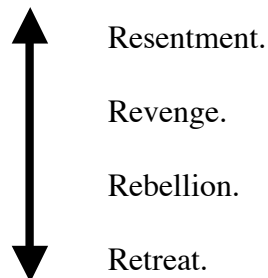
2) **The intent is to:**

Send a message.

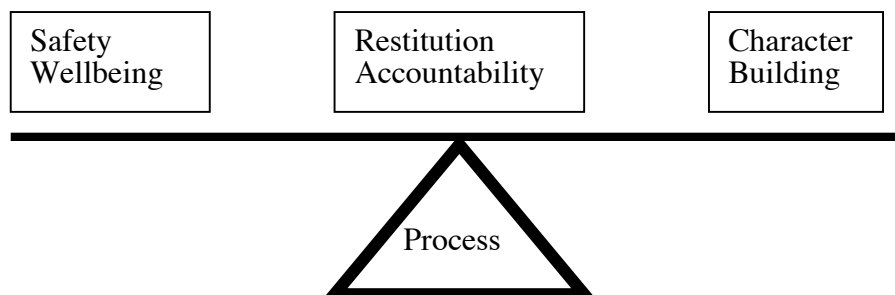
- a) To perpetrators.
- b) To the community.

F) **EFFECTS OF PUNISHMENT**

Ryne v. Childs, 3590 F. Supp 1085 (N.D. Fla, 1973) “The severity of the punishment (should be) commensurate with the severity of the acts committed.



THE BALANCE



G) **BEHAVIORAL SYNTHESIS** - Basic processes which creates a pattern of behavior out of personal experiences and physiological needs.

- 1) **Acceptable behavior is the result of appropriate exposure**
 - a) To necessary learning conditions.
- 2) **A predisposition for a certain behavior**
 - a) May be intrinsically or extrinsically defined.
- 3) **If a behavior is not in a student's repertoire,**
 - a) They are unable to invoke proper or acceptable behavior regardless of the learning conditions.

Behavioral synthesis is not a closed system. Children cannot violate or create order out of disorder without a compensating process.

H) **INCORPORATED ENVIRONMENT**

- 1) **The environment produces experiences.**
 - a) They become **memories, attitudes and habits.**
- 2) **Pathways are fixed into some chemical or electrical fashion.**
 - * Just as a common laborer's body alters according to the work, **an individual's brain becomes altered according to past experiences.**
 - * **The change, like the calluses on a worker's hands,** persist after the experience ends.
- 3) **The brain incorporates a sum total of past experiences long after the experiences are gone.**
 - a) **That means that cause and cure aren't the same thing.**
 - * The cause of behavior disorders might lie in childhood experiences, **but you can't cure the disorder by eliminating the cause,** because the cause disappears by school age. The cure has to come from some other direction.

- * **As an example**, a match may start a fire, but once the fire is burning, putting out the match won't stop it. The problem is no longer the match, it is the fire.

II) THE BEST OF ERIC

A) OVERALL SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PLAN

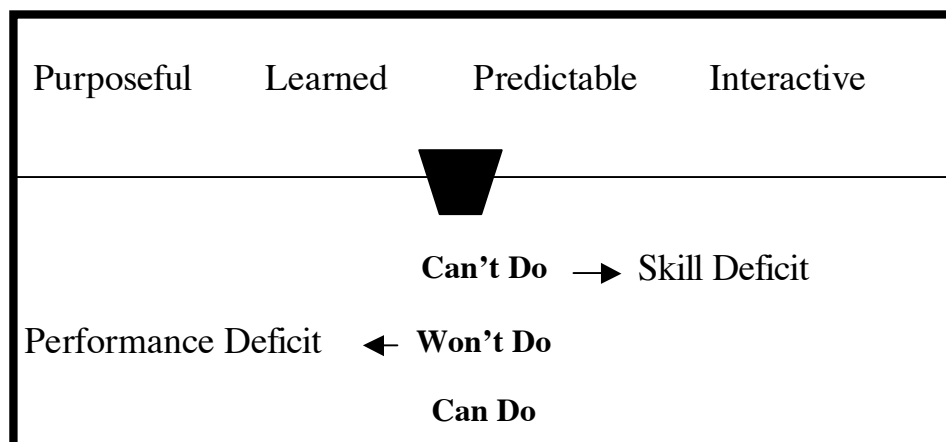
- 1) **Should be established for all students, adopted by the board as policy.**
 - a) Preplan, reflects responsive tactics.
 - b) Due process.
 - c) Behavioral rehearsal.

—————→ ***RETURN DEMONSTRATION*** ←————


B) THE PREVENTION CONTINUUM

- 1) **Target all students.**
 - a) Promote healthy individuals.
- 2) **Target “high risk” students.**
 - a) To stop, to reduce, to change.
- 3) **Target troubled students.**
 - a) To rehabilitate, to reconstruct, to treat.

C) FOUR ASSUMPTIONS OF BEHAVIOR



D) **RESISTANCE LEVELS**

	Presence	Resistance in the form of presence or occurrence in an unauthorized place.	A student in the hall without a pass.
	Verbal	Resistance that is spoken.	Verbal defiance or spoken refusal to obey.
	Passive Physical	Resistance that is passive and static in nature.	Refusal to follow an order.
	Active Physical	Resistance that is active and energetic in nature.	Pulling away or running away.
	Aggravated Physical	Resistance directed against a lawful authority.	A push or a strike that does not cause injury.
	Aggravated Physical	Resistance intended to or likely to cause injury.	An attack with a weapon.

 **Positional conflict/continuum of no chance.**

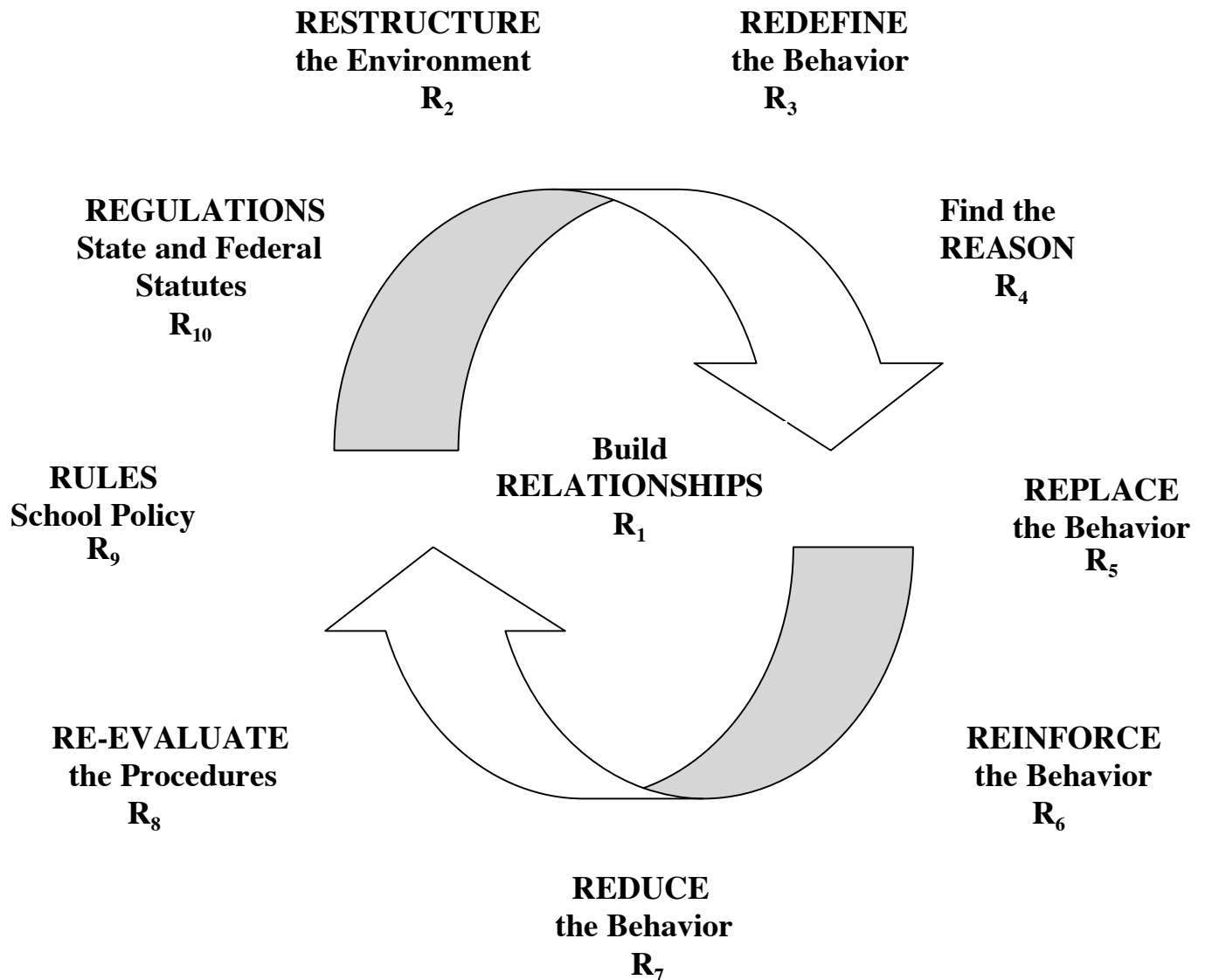
 **Principled conflict/continuum of chance.**

E) **THREE OPPORTUNITIES TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR:**

1	BEFORE the behavior occurs:
	As a proactive teaching strategy.
2	DURING the occurrence of the behavior:
	As an immediate intervention.
3	AFTER the behavior occurs:
	As a consequence to the action.

- 1) **Problem behaviors disrupt classroom activities.**
 - a) Well-behaved students spend less time engaged in instructional and learning activities.
 - b) It may be that reading achievement and problem behavior develop in tandem during the early elementary years.¹³

THE TEN₁₀ R's



Hartwig/Thomas
July, 2008

¹³ Trzesniewski, K.H., Moffitt, T.E., Caspi, A., Taylor, A., & Maughan, B. (2006). *Supra*.

III) RESPONSE TO BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION (RbI)

A) BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS HAVE CONSISTENTLY BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A MAJOR CONCERN

- 1) **Few educators or psychologists have outlined a conceptual model that suitably guides the analysis of behavioral/social/emotional functioning.** ^{14 15 16}
 - a) The process is influenced by both characteristics of the environment (e.g., people, materials, space, etc.) and
 - b) The individual (cognition, temperament, family functioning, etc.).
- 2) **A student's behavior in the classroom is, accordingly,**
 - a) Viewed as the result of a complex interaction between the nature of a student's social-emotional development at any given time and the instructional context within which the behavior occurs.
- 3) **The paradigm that is emerging.**
 - a) Matching individual needs to different intervention strategies,
 - b) Evaluating the response to these interventions, and
 - c) Gradually building up a set of prescriptive treatments which result in positive developmental changes. ¹⁷

If risk and protective factors can be distinguished and quantified, the effects of intervention, at least theoretically, can be maximized.

¹⁴ Hyman, I., Flanagan, D., & Smith, K. (1982). Discipline in the schools. In C.R. Reynolds & T.B. Gudkin (Eds.), *Handbook of school psychology* (p. 454-480). New York: Wiley.

¹⁵ Jones, B.E., & Jones, L.S. (1981). *Responsible classroom discipline*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

¹⁶ Wolfgang, C.H. & Glickman, C.D. (1980). *Solving discipline problems: Strategies for classroom teachers*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

¹⁷ Barclay, J.R. (1983). Moving toward a technology of prevention: A model and some tentative findings. *School Psychology Review*, 12, 21-28.

- 4) **A multitiered problem-solving model is in.**
 - a) Define the problem –
 - i) What is the behavior problem and why is it happening?
 - b) Develop a plan –
 - i) What are we going to do?
 - c) Implement plan –
 - i) Carry out the intervention.
 - d) Evaluate –
 - i) Did the plan work?
- 5) **Target instructional interventions to specific needs.**
 - a) As soon as those needs become apparent.
- 6) **Utilize a problem-solving method.**
 - a) An assessment-reflection-intervention cycle.
 - b) Assumes problems will arise and solutions eventually can be found.
 - c) Designed to enhance the educational outcomes of ALL students.
- 7) **Examines the cause-effect relationships...**
 - a) Between academic or behavioral interventions and
 - b) Student response to that intervention in the general education classroom.¹⁸

B) **CONSIDER**

- 1) **Students are misbehaving.**
—————▶ They don't know how to behave.

¹⁸ Brown-Chidsey, R., & Steege, M.W. (2005). *Supra*.

- They don't have the skills to behave.
- They haven't been taught the appropriate replacement behavior.

C) **ADDRESSING BEHAVIORS THROUGH CONTEXT**

Refers to all independent variables that might effect a student at any given point in time.

1) **Environmental.**

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| * Behavioral sink. | * Noise level. |
| * Seating arrangements. | * Frequent disruptions. |

2) **Physiological/emotional conditions.**

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| * Anxiety. | * Illness. |
| * Hunger or thirst. | * Pain. |
| * Anger. | * Sickness/allergies. |
| * Fatigue. | * Side effects of medication. |
| * Increased arousal due to a fight, missing the bus, a disruptive routine. | |

3) **Setting events.**

***Setting events* are antecedent events that are removed in time and place from the occurrence of behavior, but are functionally related to that behavior.** ^{19 20 21}

Given a particular setting event, **a particular behavior is more likely to occur than if the setting event is absent.** For example, getting into a fight on the bus on the way to school can serve as a setting event for

¹⁹ Bijou, S., & Baer, D. (1961). "Child development: A systematic and empirical theory" (vol. 1). New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

²⁰ Kantor, J.R. (1970). An analysis of the experimental analysis of behavior (TEAB). *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior*, 13, 101-108.

²¹ Wahler, R., & Fox, J. (1981). Setting events in applied behavior analysis: Toward a conceptual and methodological expansion. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 14, 327-338.

noncompliance to teacher instructions later in the school day. Setting events, unlike discriminative stimuli, are removed in time and place from behavior (i.e., behavior is not under the stimulus control of the setting event).

- Presence and interaction of specific classmates.
- Degree of teacher proximity.
- Presence of extraneous stimuli.
- Immediately antecedent to the challenging behavior.
 - Particular kind of activity.
 - Innocent antecedent stimuli.

4) **Curriculum and instruction:**

- Limited opportunities for making choices.
- Lack of predictability in the schedule.
- Inadequate level of assistance.
- Poor directions.
- Few opportunities to communicate.
- Activities too difficult.
- Activities that take a long time to complete.
- Activities that the student dislikes.
- Activities for which the completion criterion is unclear.
- Activities that might not be perceived as being relevant or useful by the student.

IV) **A PLAN**

A) **A STUDENT'S BEHAVIORAL RESPONSE IS BASED ON CONTEXTUAL FACTORS PRESENT AT ANY GIVEN TIME**

- 1) **It is clear that long-term personal and social adjustment of students is based to a large degree on:**

- a) An ability to build and maintain positive interpersonal relationships,
 - b) Skills in establishing peer acceptance,
 - c) The capacity to form meaningful relationships, and
 - d) Skills that allow for avoidance or termination of a negative or destructive relationships with others.^{22 23 24}
- 2) **Challenging classroom behavior occurs when there is a mismatch between a student's social-emotional development and the instructional context.**
- a) In contrast, prosocial behavior occurs when the demands of a given instructional context are appropriate for a student's social-emotional capacity at that time.
 - b) Problematic behaviors must be dealt with before educational needs can be addressed.²⁵
- 3) **Changing one or more of the factors that comprise the context for instruction.**
- a) Should facilitate student's prosocial behavior and minimize challenging behavior.
- 4) **The universal nature of screening means that all students are screened regularly to determine if school problems are present.**

B) INTERVENTION STRATEGIES:

- 1) **Must be targeted at:**
 - a) Preventing (80%).
 - b) Appropriately managing the impeding behavior (or behaviors).

²² Kupersmidt, J., Coie, J., & Dodge, K. (1990). The role of peer relationships in the development of disorder. In S. Asher & J. Coie (Eds.), *Peer rejection in childhood* (pp. 274-308). New York: Cambridge University Press.

²³ Parker, J., & Asher, S. (1987). *Supra*.

²⁴ Walker, H.M., Ramsey, E., & Gresham, F.M. (2004). *Antisocial behavior in school: Evidence-based practices* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth Learning.

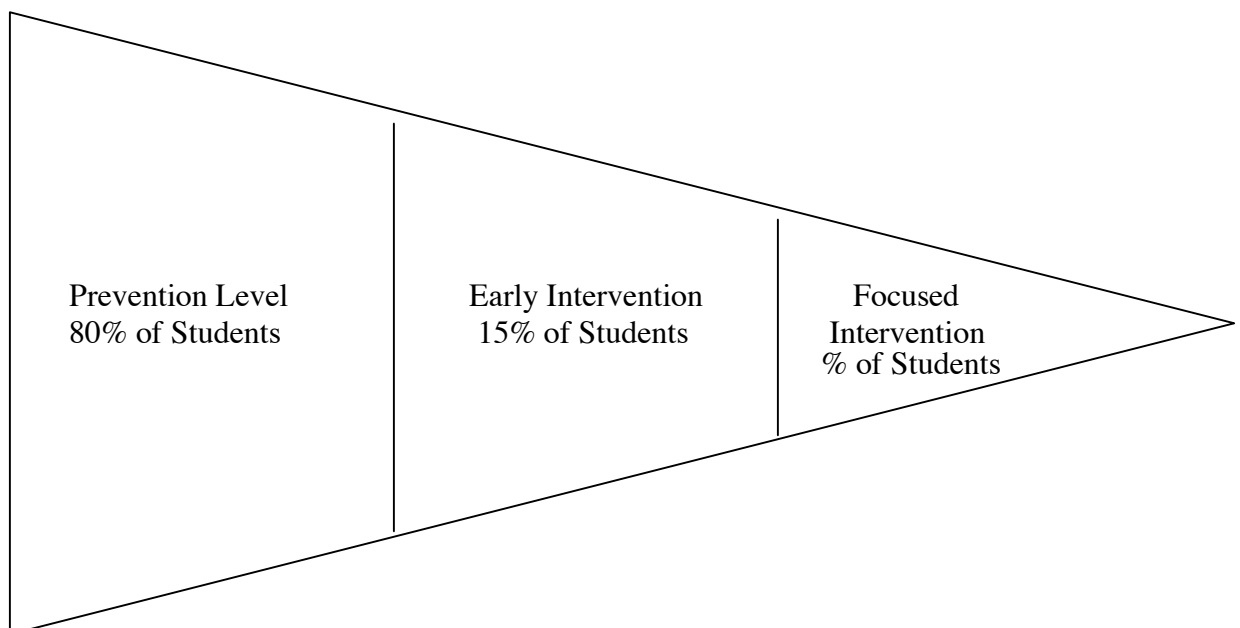
²⁵ Wehby, J.H., Lane, K.L., & Falk, K.B. (2003). Academic instruction for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 11(4), 194-197.

- c) Reducing (normalizing) and
- d) Replacing the inappropriate behavior with a functional equivalent.

C) **REASONABLE ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATIONS MUST BE MADE**

- 1) **Antecedent interventions:** What changes can be made to the environment to prevent the problem behavior from occurring?
- 2) **Alternative skills instruction:** What skills can be taught to the student that will reduce the occurrence of the problem behavior?
- 3) **Instructional consequent strategies:** What changes can be made to the instructional process to reinforce new skill acquisition and diminish problem behavior occurrence?
- 4) **Reduction-oriented consequent strategies:** What consequences, if any, need to be put in place to reduce the occurrence of the problem behavior?
- 5) **Long-term prevention strategies:** What other individual or situational factors can be supported to improve the student's behavioral functioning?
- 6) **Support for team members:** What support needs to be provided to team members to enable them to contribute to the intervention in an optimal way?
 - a) Collaboration, not just collegial.

D) **ALTERABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS**



E) **THE PREVENTION CONTINUUM**

- 1) **Target all students.**
 - a) Promote health individuals.
- 2) **Target “high risk” students.**
 - a) To stop, to reduce, to change.
- 3) **Target troubled students.**
 - a) To rehabilitate, to reconstruct, to treat.

V) **THE POINT...A DIMENSIONAL VIEW**

A) **THE SCREENING PROCESS**

- 1) **Universal screening.**
 - a) Recognized as crucial to achieving better outcomes in schools and preventing achievement and behavior problems ²⁶.
- 2) **Early behavioral screenings.**
 - a) Test the plausibility and productivity of universal behavior management interventions to work with students at risk for behavior problems.
- 3) **Studying behavior of potential significance.**
 - a) In naturalistic settings (e.g., school, playground, community).²⁷
- 4) **Universal screening is a population-based system.**
 - a) Screening and determining which students may need more assistance.

²⁶ National Research Council (2002). *Minority Students in Special and Gifted Education*, Committee on Minority Representation in Special Education, M. Suzanne Donovan & Christopher T. Cross (Eds.). Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

²⁷ Gresham, F.M., Watson, T.S., & Skinner, C.H. (2001). Functional behavioral assessment: Principles, procedures, and future directions, *School Psychology Review*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 156-172.

- 5) **Population-based decision making comes from the field of public health.**
 - a) Screen the entire school population for identification of possible school difficulties.
- 6) **Screening is performed to identify students who may be significantly different behaviorally or academically from age or grade level peers.**^{28 29}
 - a) Provide initial information about a group of students,
 - b) Determine groupings, or
 - c) Identify students in need of further intervention.

B) MONITORING PROGRESS

- 1) **Monitor or assess the progress of the student after intervention.**
 - a) Data may be gathered and documented about the effects of contextual antecedents and behavioral intervention techniques.³⁰
- 2) **Change either the student's development or the instructional context.**
 - a) Teachers, at least in the short run, generally have limited influence on the student-specific factors that determine social-emotional development (e.g., neurological status, cognitive abilities, temperament, etc.)
- 3) **Social-emotional behavioral problems are uniquely challenging.**
 - a) They are perhaps the most vexing because they are abstract.
 - b) Formulating long-term plans.

²⁸ McLoughlin, J.A. & Lewis, R.B. (1981) "Assessing special students: Strategies and procedures." Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill.

²⁹ Salvia, J. & Ysseldyke, J.E. (1985). *Assessment in special and remedial education* (3rd Ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

³⁰ McLoughlin, J.A. & Lewis, R.B. (1981). *Supra*.

4) **The intensity of the interventions can be increased.**

- a) For students who do not respond to standard interventions.

C) **REDUCE THE MOTIVATION TO EXHIBIT THE MALADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR**

1) **The focus of any intervention should be the development of strategies to ameliorate concerns at any level.**

Effective instructional practices.

Reinforcement procedures.

- * Step by step process of what will be reinforced during the duration and time period, variable ratio, etc.

2) **It is simply not enough to help a student acquire appropriate behaviors and overcome inappropriate ones;**

It is also necessary to maintain conditions to ensure that the improvements will last.³¹

D) **PLACE MALADAPTIVE BEHAVIORS ON EXTINCTION**

Never reinforce maladaptive behavior again.

Escape extinction procedures.

- Outline extinction procedures.

E) **TEACH THE REPLACEMENT BEHAVIOR INTENSELY AND PRACTICE OFTEN**

Positive practice.

F) **DIFFERENTIALLY REINFORCE THE REPLACEMENT BEHAVIOR**

Provide the functionally equivalent reinforcement for the replacement behavior.

³¹ Lovaas, I. (1977). *The autistic child: Language development through behavior modification*. New York.

G) **80% DEVOTED TO ADDRESSING THE ENVIRONMENT**

Prevent the behavior from occurring.

To teach functional equivalents.

MEASUREMENT

H) **IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

1) **Create evidence-based intervention plans.**

a) Implement antecedent intervention.

b) Teach replacement behavior.

2) **Re-evaluate/screen students every three months.**

a) Revise the intervention protocol as necessary.

3) **Focus on prevention.**

a) Adapting classroom context to enable positive behavioral performance for all students.

I) **A COMBINATION OF WELL-KNOWN ACTIVITIES**

1) **A comprehensive school approach rather than in isolation.**

a) A coordinated set of activities designed to complement one another as a means to influence discipline within the school.

2) **The school should be viewed as a place where staff and students experience the success of doing something well.**

a) Communication, active participation and the acknowledgement of the importance of self-respect are highlighted.

3) **Be student-oriented.**

a) Everyone contributes by emphasizing a positive image.

- 4) **Focus on the causes of discipline rather than simply reacting to the symptoms.**
 - a) Do not look for the quick fix or the simple answer to solve complex issues.
- 5) **Emphasize reinforcing positive behaviors and preventive measures.**
 - a) Rather than focusing only on punitive actions.
- 6) **Adapt disciplinary practices to meet your own needs.**
 - a) Successful schools report their plans were not based on any widely publicized program.
- 7) **The building administrator plays a significant role.**
 - a) Teaching staff are primarily responsible for handling discipline problems and handle most, or all, of the discipline.
 - i) The school administration provides support,
 - ii) Day-to-day operations are the responsibility of the classroom teacher.
- 8) **Create a strong relationship with parents and community agencies.**
 - a) Frequent and meaningful relationships established between the home, the community and the school.
- 9) **Be open to review from school and community sources.**
 - a) Critique your own practices and make changes as needed.³²

THE END

³² Wayson, W.W., et al. (1982). *Handbook for developing schools with good discipline*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

A Working Model for Positive Classroom Based Alternatives
Eric P. Hartwig, Ph.D.

VI) POSITIVE EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES...

A) HUMOR

Humor seems to work for a number of reasons.^{33 34}

B) POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT...DIFFERENTIAL

Reinforcers must be valued, preferred and individualized.

C) NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT?

D) SHAPING...PROBLEM SOLVING

E) HOW TO DIMINISH POWER STRUGGLES

F) POWER STRUGGLE REDUCTION PLAN

G) OPPOSITIONAL BEHAVIOR

H) ENCOURAGING REPLACEMENT ALTERNATIVES TO PROBLEM BEHAVIORS

I) DESCRIPTIVE PRAISE

J) GETTING COMPLIANCE

K) FORESHADOWING ... PREDICT A MISUNDERSTANDING

L) MAKE REASONABLE ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATIONS

M) MODEL CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SUMMARY...THE ANTECEDENTS

³³ Long, N.J., & Newman, R.G. (1980). Managing surface behavior of children in school in N.J. Long, W.C. Morse, & R.G. Newman (eds.). *Conflict in the classroom: The education of emotionally disturbed children*, 4th Ed., Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, pp. 233-241. Also described this technique, noting that “a humorous comment is able to penetrate a tense and anxiety-producing situation” (p. 237).

³⁴ Carlson, P., & Peterson, R.L. (1995). Changing behavior with humor. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, National Educational Service, 4(2), 28-30.